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#2

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SMITH
QUESADA
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HERE COMES...

DAREDEVIL®

THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR!

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Stan Lee presents DAREDEVIL in

GUARDIAN DEVIL

PART TWO:

"The Unexamined Life"

KEVIN KUNG FU GRIP SMITH WRITER

JOE PUFF DADDY JIMMY JIGGY WID IT

QUESADA PENCILER PALMIOTTI INKER

AVALON STUDIOS

LAURA BEASTIE BABE DEPUY COLORS

RICHARD STARKINGS & COMICRAFT'S

LIZ TRIBE AGRAPHIOTIS LETTERS

DANCI MIX MASTAH BOB NOTORIOUS B.I.G. BOSS

DAKESIAN EDITOR HARRAS EDITOR IN CHIEF

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I LOST MY SIGHT -- THANKS LARGELY TO A GOOD DEED.

LATER IN LIFE, I CONTINUED THE TREND BY BECOMING 1) A LAWYER BY DAY, AND 2) A COSTUMED CRIME-FIGHTER BY NIGHT.

FROM NINE TO FIVE, MY NAME'S MATT MURDOCK.

AFTER THAT, I GO BY DAREDEVIL.

THE LADY IS ANOTHER 'COSTUME' I'VE KNOWN FOR SOME TIME – NATASHA ROMANOV. SHE CALLS HERSELF THE BLACK WIDOW.

WE USED TO DATE.

WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS.

DON'T EVEN TRY TO TELL ME IT'S MINE.

WELL, THERE GOES PLAN 'A'.

HOW ARE YOU, NATASHA?

CURIOUS, MATTHEW.

I'M WONDERING WHY YOU WOULD TRY TO CALL ME, ONLY TO ABORT BEFORE THE CONNECTION WAS MADE.

SOMETHING CAME UP. SOMETHING WHO'S HARDER TO ENTERTAIN THAN A JADED FILM CRITIC.

I'VE NOTICED. TELL ME -- DID YOUR WICKED, WOMANIZING PAST FINALLY CATCH UP WITH YOU?

BABY POWDER

BUNCH in a Box

YESTERDAY MORNING, I'M IN CONFESSION...

STILL WITH THE CHURCH. IN ALL THE TIME WE SPENT TOGETHER, DIDN'T YOU LEARN *ANYTHING* FROM THE GODLESS SOVIET?

... AND I PICK UP A GIRL AND AN INFANT BEING RUN DOWN. DAREDEVIL PUTS THE KIBOSH ON THE THUGS, BUT THE GIRL AND THE BABY DISAPPEAR.

LAST NIGHT, THE GIRL SHOWS UP IN MY OFFICE, AND DUMPS THE BABY IN MY LAP...

AND SUDDENLY, YOU'RE A DADDY.

I'M NOT THIS KID'S FATHER, I ASSURE YOU.

COULD'VE FOOLED ME...

HE'S GOT YOUR GRIP.

THE GIRL TOLD ME THIS CHILD WAS SOME SORT OF SAVIOR -- A REDEEMER. SHE SAID AN ANGEL TOLD HER TO SEEK ME OUT -- TO PROTECT THE CHILD.

IDEALISTIC YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN, MATTHEW -- BUT GULLIBLE? THAT'S A NEW ATTRIBUTE.

SHE ALSO SAID THE ANGEL TOLD HER I WAS DAREDEVIL.

MAKE THAT ***EXTREMELY*** GULLIBLE. DIDN'T YOU ONCE TELL ME THAT WILSON FISK KNEW AS WELL?

SNK

LOOK -- HE'S A CLEVER LITTLE THING.

HEY, HEY! CAREFUL THERE!

AREN'T THOSE THINGS LETHAL?

BUT APPARENTLY NOT CHILDPROOF. REMIND ME NEVER TO ASK TONY STARK FOR ENGINEERING TIPS AGAIN.

SO WHAT -- DID YOU WANT ME TO HELP YOU TRACK DOWN THE MOTHER?

YOU THINK SHE'S IN CAHOOTS WITH FISK SOMEHOW?

I'M PRETTY SURE THE KINGPIN HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS.

I WAS CALLING ABOUT...

SOMETHING ELSE.

I SEE...

AND WHERE *IS* THE DEAR GIRL -- YOUR *'BETTER HALF'*?

KAREN? THAT'S... WELL, THAT'S WHAT I WAS CALLING YOU ABOUT.

YOUR GIRLFRIEND LEFT YOU AND YOU STARTED FEELING... *NOSTALGIC*... ABOUT US?

WE HAVEN'T SEEN ONE ANOTHER IN QUITE SOME TIME -- YOU HAVEN'T ACTUALLY TRIED TO *CONTACT* ME IN I CAN'T REMEMBER HOW LONG.

BUT THE LITTLE WOMAN SENDS YOU PACKING, AND SUDDENLY YOU REMEMBER MY NUMBER AFTER ALL THIS TIME...?

Uh... WELL, THAT IS TO SAY... I DIDN'T MEAN...

YOU'LL NEVER CHANGE, MATTHEW.

YOU'RE SO UNABLE TO FACE THE FACT THAT -- HEROICS ASIDE -- YOU'RE JUST A *MAN...* NO DIFFERENT THAN THE REST.

MY SELF-RESPECT ALMOST DEMANDS THAT I PUMMEL YOU FOR YOUR PRESUMPTUOUS BOORISHNESS...

BUT UNLIKE YOURSELF, I CAN EMBRACE THE BAGGAGE OF MY OWN HUMANITY.

COUCH OR ROOF?

ZZP

AREN'T YOU FORGETTING SOMETHING?

I TRUST YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH ONE OF THESE?

COULD YOU KEEP AN EYE ON IT FOR A BIT? I HAVE TO GO TO MY OFFICE.

I'M GOING TO CHECK OUT THE CITY'S HOSPITALS' BIRTH RECORDS FROM THE LAST FEW MONTHS -- SEE IF I CAN DIG UP ANYTHING ON THE MOTHER.

BUT...

I PROMISE, I WON'T BE LONG.

WOULD YOU MIND CHECKING ITS DIAPER, THOUGH?

I COULDN'T MUSTER UP THE GUTS TO CHANGE IT YET.

THANKS, 'TASHA.

BUT...

GOOD GOD -- I WAS AN *AVENGER!*

THE LAW OFFICES OF SHARPE, NELSON AND MURDOCK...

ZYSK, BRIAN DAVID. MALE. BORN AUGUST SECOND. FATHER: JOSEPH Q. -- AGE THIRTY-TWO; MOTHER: NANCI D. -- AGE TWENTY-NINE.

END OF LISTINGS.

SO MUCH FOR SAINT ANTHONY'S.

THAT'S THE TWO HUNDREDTH AND TWELFTH HOSPITAL'S RECORDS I'VE ACCESSED -- AND I'VE YET TO COME ACROSS A BIRTH RECORD THAT MATCHES THE BABY OR GWYNETH.

IRONICALLY, ALMOST ALL OF THEIR RECENT BIRTHS ALSO ACCOUNT FOR OVER HALF OF THEIR RECENT DEATHS.

SO MUCH CARNAGE, WITH NO POSSIBLE EXPLANATION -- AS IF ONE EXISTS THAT COULD EVER CONSOLE THE GRIEVING. ALL ANYONE CAN DO AT THIS POINT IS BRING THE GUILTY PARTIES TO JUSTICE.

I AND OTHERS LIKE ME SPEND MOST OF OUR LIVES PROTECTING THE INNOCENT -- BUT NONE OF US EVER THOUGHT OF DOING SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS PERIODICALLY CHECKING IN ON ANY GIVEN HOSPITAL'S NEO-NATAL WARD.

SOMETIMES I WONDER IF I'M JUST A BANDAGE ON A CANCER.

MISTER MURDOCK?

YES, KIM?

YOUR ELEVEN THIRTY'S HERE.

I HAVE AN ELEVEN THIRTY?

YES, SIR. A NICHOLAS MACABES.

NO. SHOW HIM...

KIM -- THERE'S NOTHING HERE ON MY SCHEDULE ABOUT AN ELEVEN THIRTY.

ACCORDING TO MY SCHEDULE, IT WAS BOOKED WEEKS AGO -- THOUGH I DON'T RECALL PENCILING IT IN MYSELF. SHOULD I RESCHEDULE?

GOOD OF YOU TO SEE ME, MISTER MURDOCK.

... IN.

THE ROOM SEEMS TO HAVE SUDDENLY GOTTEN COLDER...

I'M NICHOLAS MACABES. YOUR ELEVEN THIRTY.

YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE ME, MISTER MACABES -- I DON'T SEEM TO HAVE ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR CASE ON MY DESK.

YOU WOULDN'T, MISTER MURDOCK -- IT'S A SENSITIVE MATTER THAT'S DEVELOPED IN THE LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

I BELIEVE YOU HAVE IN YOUR CARE, A CHILD.

ARE YOU FROM SOCIAL SERVICES?

IN A FASHION -- IT'S SOCIETY I SERVE. SOCIETY AND THE GOOD OF THE WORLD AT LARGE.

I'M AFRAID YOU'VE LOST ME.

MISTER MURDOCK... MATTHEW -- I'M SURE I NEEDN'T INFORM YOU OF THE FORCES AT WORK IN THIS WORLD ON A DAILY BASIS THAT DEFY SENSIBLE EXPLANATION.

IN THE COURSE OF YOUR LIFETIME, YOU'VE SEEN...

... FIGURATIVELY, OF COURSE...

... WONDERS THAT'VE BECOME SO COMMONPLACE, YOUR RATIONAL MIND HAS SINCE STOPPED ANY ATTEMPTS AT PRODUCING VIABLE RESPONSES FOR THE ELEMENTARY INQUIRIES OF *'HOW'*, *'WHAT'*, AND *'WHY'*. WHETHER IT BE THE UNFATHOMABLE CONUNDRUM OF A *'DEVOURER OF WORLDS'*...

... OR THE SIMPLE QUESTION OF HOW A MAN CAN PRODUCE ICE FROM HIS HANDS, BEAMS OF PURE ENERGY FROM HIS EYES, OR ELASTICITY ON A MOLECULAR LEVEL FROM EVERY CELL IN HIS STRUCTURE...

... YOU -- LIKE MOST -- HAVE GIVEN UP ON LOOKING FOR SOLUTIONS TO THESE SCIENTIFIC MYSTERIES AND ACCEPTED THEM AS ROTE.

I WOULD ASK THAT YOU NOW EXTEND THAT FAITH IN *'WHAT IS'* TO A MATTER MORE... SPIRITUAL IN NATURE.

THAT BEING?

THE END OF TIME. THE APOCALYPSE.

I'LL PLAY ALONG, MISTER MACABES. THIS HAS WHAT TO DO WITH ME?

INTO YOUR SAFEKEEPING HAS BEEN PLACED THE MAIN COG IN WHAT IS TO BE THE MACHINATIONS OF THE END OF THE WORLD. THE INFANT.

YOU DON'T SAY.

MISTER MACABES, YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE ME -- THERE'S A PILE OF WORK I'VE YET TO GET TO THAT'LL MEAN THE END OF THE WORLD FOR *ME* IF I DON'T GET THROUGH IT TODAY.

I UNDERSTAND YOUR RELUCTANCE -- AS GOOD-HUMORED AS IT IS PHRASED -- TO GRASP WHAT I'M IMPARTING, MATTHEW. HOWEVER, I'M AFRAID I DON'T HAVE TIME TO LEAD THIS HORSE TO WATER, SO TO SPEAK.

SUFFICE TO SAY, MY ORGANIZATION FOUND THE NOTION OF HANDING OVER THE ANTICHRIST TO A MAN WHO ADORNS HIMSELF IN A DEMON'S MANTLE SOMEWHAT TASTELESSLY VULGAR...

... NOT TO MENTION ON-THE-NOSE.

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE?! WHO ARE YOU?! HOW DO YOU PEOPLE KNOW... ?!

RELEASE ME, COUNSELOR!

THIS IS MY ONLY GOOD SUIT.

YOU'RE BEING USED AS A PAWN, MATTHEW. THE FORCES MYSELF AND MY ORGANIZATION ARE WORKING TO STOP...

... HAVE SINGLED YOU OUT AS AN UNWITTING ACCOMPLICE IN THEIR NEFARIOUS DESIGNS.

YOU'RE A SOMEWHAT RELIGIOUS MAN, SO I ASK THAT YOU REACH BACK TO THE DAYS OF YOUR RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND RECALL THE BOOK OF REVELATIONS.

THE ANTICHRIST IS THE HARBINGER OF THE END OF TIME, AND THAT HARBINGER HAS BEEN PLACED IN YOUR KEEPING, UNDER THE GUISE OF THE "*INFANT SAVIOR*".

IS THAT NOT WHAT YOU WERE TOLD BY THE YOUNG WOMAN IN YOUR OFFICE YESTERDAY?

SOMETHING... SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE CHILD IS THE VERY OPPOSITE OF A SAVIOR. WOULD A "*SAVIOR*" ALLOW SO MANY INNOCENTS TO DIE IN ITS NAME -- AS SO MANY HAVE OVER THE LAST WEEK IN THIS CITY'S HOSPITALS?

THE CHILD IS A MENACE -- A MAGGOT THAT WILL FESTER INTO THE DEATH OF THIS WORLD, SHOULD IT BE ALLOWED TO AGE.

AND WHILE I CAN APPRECIATE YOUR HESITANCY TO ACCEPT THIS DUE TO ITS OUTWARD APPEARANCE OF INNOCENCE, I WOULD ASK THAT YOU CALL UPON YOUR LACK OF SIGHT TO GET BEYOND WHAT MAY SEEM OBVIOUS...

... AND TAKE HEED OF WHAT I'M, TELLING YOU... THIS FLAME MUST BE DOUSED BEFORE IT GROWS INTO A PYRE THAT WILL ENGULF ALL THAT YOU HOLD DEAR.

HIS HEARTBEAT REMAINS CONSTANT -- SOMEHOW, HE'S TELLING THE TRUTH.

BUT SO WAS GWYNETH... WASN'T SHE?

I'M SUDDENLY VERY BEFUDDLED... AND VERY SCARED.

YOU'RE ASKING ME TO TAKE ITS LIFE?!

I WOULDN'T REQUEST OF YOU SUCH A BURDEN -- THAT IS FOR MY ORGANIZATION TO UNDERTAKE.

WHAT THE ***HELL*** IS THIS ORGANIZATION YOU ***KEEP TALKING ABOUT?!***

ONE WHOSE SOLE PURPOSE IS TO SEE THAT THE HUMAN RACE ENDURES. SHEOL.

HOW COME I'VE NEVER HEARD OF IT?!

BECAUSE SOME CONCEPTS CANNOT BE GRASPED AS EASILY AS OTHERS.

THE UNSEEN WORLD HAS ALWAYS BEEN BEYOND HUMAN COMPREHENSION MATTHEW. IT OFFERS NO ANSWERS, AND RESISTS THE CATEGORIZATION THAT HUMANITY DEMANDS. TO REVEAL OURSELVES... OUR TRUE FORMS... OUR EFFORTS... TO A MIND INCAPABLE OF GRASPING THE SPIRITUAL WOULD BE TO CONDEMN SAID MIND TO MADNESS.

BUT SHEOL HAS BEEN HERE FOR YOU -- LONG BEFORE YOU CRAWLED FROM THE MUCK. WE'VE GUIDED YOUR DEVELOPMENT, AND SET IN MOTION THE MEANS BY WHICH YOU MAY CONTINUE AS A SPECIES.

WE EMBODY YOUR HOPES AND IDEALS, AND WHEN NECESSARY, PROVIDE YOU WTH THE GUARDIANS THAT AID IN KEEPING YOU FROM HARM...

"... WHETHER IT BE PROMPTING RADIOACTIVE INSECTS TO STRIKE...

"... OR SIMPLY HURLING AN ISOTOPE IN THE PROPER DIRECTION.

"... OR GAMMA BOMBS TO EXPLODE IN THE COMPANY OF THOSE WHO CAN RISE TO THE CHALLENGE OF PROTECTING HUMANITY...

"THE CHILD IS EVIL -- THAT MUCH I HOPE I'VE IMPARTED TO YOU, IF NOTHING ELSE, AND THE LONGER IT'S IN YOUR CARE, THE MORE YOUR LIFE WILL UNDERGO GRAVE UPHEAVALS."

UPHEAVALS?

EVIL TAINTS ALL IT TOUCHES. THE ONES YOU HOLD DEAREST -- YOU RISK THEM BY HARBORING THE ABOMINATION.

I TELL YOU THIS NOT AS A THREAT, BUT AS A WARNING -- DELIVER THE CHILD UNTO US SO THAT YOU MAY NOT JEOPARDIZE THOSE YOU LOVE.

FORTY-EIGHT HOURS, MATTHEW -- I CAN OFFER YOU THAT MUCH TIME TO COLLECT YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE MATTER.

I TRUST YOU'LL MAKE THE WISEST CHOICE -- FOR YOURSELF, FOR US, AND FOR YOUR WORLD.

BUT I SHOULD ADD THAT IF THE FORCES BEHIND THIS DIVINE THAT YOU HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR DUPLICITY, THEY MAY SEEK TO DO YOU HARM.

AND AT THAT POINT...

...NOT EVEN A LEGION OF ANGELS CAN RESCUE YOU FROM HARM.

MATT MU
ATTORNE

HEAD'S SWIMMING IN A MAELSTROM OF INFORMATION...

SO MUCH SO THAT I ONLY NOW NOTICE THAT HE'S LEFT A CALLING CARD OF SOME SORT.

I THINK I'M...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK.

MATT? HEY -- MATT...

WHO'S THE OLD-TIMER? THE MUSTACHE MAKES HIM LOOK LIKE THAT GUY FROM THE VILLAGE PEOPLE.

EXCEPT... YOU KNOW... OLDER.

HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE -- TRY TO SORT THROUGH THIS...

HEY -- I WANTED TO KNOW IF I COULD BORROW YOUR COMPANY CARD?

I DROPPED MINE IN THE TOILET AT MAYROSE LAST WEEK, AND I WANTED TO TAKE LYDIA OUT TONIGHT, TO TALK ABOUT HER CASE. SO...

THE PLATINUM!

THANKS, MATTY!

FISK.

IT HAS TO BE FISK.

IT'S AN APPROACH I NEVER WOULD'VE EXPECTED FROM HIM, BUT IT'S THE ONLY RATIONAL EXPLANATION I CAN...

THE ONLY... RATIONAL...

"SOME CONCEPTS CANNOT BE GRASPED AS EASILY AS OTHERS," HE SAID.

NO.

THIS IS SOMETHING I CAN'T SLAP A SIMPLE LABEL ON AND FILE CONVENIENTLY UNDER KINGPI...

POP

ALREADY NOT THINKING STRAIGHT.

THE THUG DOESN'T HELP MATTERS MUCH.

NOT SUFFICIENTLY COWED BY THE KNEE DISLOCATION THAT GOT IN THE WAY OF HIS ATTEMPT TO MUG ME, HE OFFERS UP SOME SLANDER.

SOMETHING ABOUT MY MOTHER...

SOMETHING UNCALLED FOR...

THAT MAKES ME REALIZE...

SOMETIMES, I'M FAR TOO TOLERANT.

WHAT IS IT WITH YOU PEOPLE?

HAVEN'T I GIVEN YOU ENOUGH OF ME?

YOU WANT TO INVADE EVERY CORNER OF MY LIFE...

LEAVING ME NOTHING SACRED...

SPAKK

WELL, I'VE HAD IT WITH ALL OF YOU!

YOU'RE ALL GOING TO PA...

HEY MISTER...

ARE YOU GONNA KILL THAT GUY?

OH, GOD...

WHAT AM I DOING?

HEY MISTER -- ARE YOU OKAY?

WHAT KIND OF MUGGER WEARS A SUIT?

IT DOESN'T TAKE A PERSON VERY LONG TO SLIP INTO A ROUTINE --

-- TRANSITION TENDS TO BE ALMOST UNNOTICEABLE TO THE PARTY INVOLVED.

SHLOMO'S MOVING COMPANY

NO MATTER WHAT THE CIRCUMSTANCES -- DIRE OR OTHERWISE --

HUMAN NATURE DICTATES WE ADAPT TO REPETITION WITH RELATIVE EASE.

GWYNETH HAD COME TO COUNT ON THE CRUSH OF NINE-TO-FIVERS IN THE SUBWAYS TO ACT AS THE CAMOUFLAGE SHE NEEDED TO ELUDE HER PURSUERS.

AND AS MUCH AS IT KILLED HER TO TURN THE CHILD OVER TO A STRANGER -- ALBEIT ONE HAND-PICKED BY THE ANGELS -- AT LEAST NOW IT WAS EVEN **EASIER** TO EVADE DETECTION...

THE REWARD FOR ALL THIS SACRIFICE, SHE REASONED, WAS, THAT SOONER OR LATER, SHE'D BE ABLE TO RETRIEVE HER CHILD FROM ITS TEMPORARY PROTECTOR --GOD WOULD **HAVE TO** GRANT THAT PAIR THAT MUCH. GOD OWED IT TO THEM.

THEN, PERHAPS, SHE COULD MOVE UPSTATE -- MAKE A NEW LIFE FOR HER AND THE BABY; FALL INTO YET ANOTHER NEW ROUTINE... ONE THAT DIDN'T INVOLVE RUNNING AND HIDING.

NO -- IT DOESN'T TAKE A PERSON VERY LONG TO SLIP INTO A ROUTINE...

...BUT WHAT ONE NEVER REALLY THINKS ABOUT...

...IS HOW THEIR ROUTINE CAN BE OBSERVED BY OTHERS.

WELL PLAYED, MISTER GABRIEL. I OWE YOU FIVE DOLLARS.

YOU'VE GIVEN US QUITE A RUN FOR OUR MONEY, YOUNG HARLOT.

BUT YOU MAY BREATHE EASIER NOW...

THE CHASE IS ENDED.

MERCIFULLY, THE CITY IS QUIET TONIGHT. GIVES ME TIME TO THINK, AND WHAT I'M THINKING RIGHT ABOUT NOW ISN'T PRETTY.

YOU WOULD DO THIS TO ME, WOULDN'T YOU?

I HAVEN'T HAD ENOUGH PAIN IN MY LIFE, AND NOW YOU THROW ME INTO THE MIDDLE OF THIS?

I'M NOT ONE OF THOSE FOUR-BUCK-AN-HOUR BABYSITTERS, RED -- MY PRICE RANGE IS A LITTLE OUT OF YOUR LEAGUE.

HOW WAS IT?

REMINDS ME OF TAKING CARE OF TONY, BACK IN HIS GLASS-TIPPING DAYS.

I HAVE TO CONFESS, THOUGH -- IT'S STIRRED UP ALL SORTS OF MATERNAL INSTINCTS.

OH, I'M SURE YOU EXIST NOW...

YOU EXIST TO DEVISE A NEVER-ENDING SERIES OF ANGUISHES AND TORMENTS...

...AND THEN YOU HURL THEM MY WAY -- JUST TO SEE HOW I REACT.

WELL, I'M THROUGH PLAYING YOUR GAMES.

LET'S SEE HOW YOU REACT TO THIS ONE...

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE I HEAR MY 'BIOLOGICAL CLOCK' TICKING.

IGNORE IT. IT'S A DARK WORLD -- NO PLACE FOR A CHILD.

AH, BUT THAT'S WHERE WE COME IN, ISN'T IT? NONE OF US DON THESE COSTUMES MERELY TO MAKE A FASHION STATEMENT, DO WE?

WELL, EXCEPT MAYBE DAZZLER BACK IN THE OLD DAYS.

NATASHA -- GIVE ME THE BABY.

IT'S AN OLD QUANDARY -- FIRST YEAR PSYCH STUFF, REALLY. BUT...

IF YOU KNEW WHAT HITLER WOULD EVENTUALLY DO, WOULD YOU HAVE KILLED HIM AS A CHILD?

DEFINITELY NOT. I'D HAVE TAKEN HIM FROM HIS ENVIRONMENT, MAYBE --

TRIED TO RAISE HIM DIFFERENTLY. I BELIEVE IT'S NURTURE -- NOT NATURE.

OF COURSE YOU DO, NATASHA -- YOU HAVE THAT LUXURY.

goo!

TO BE HONEST, THOUGH -- A QUESTION LIKE THAT FROM A MAN HOLDING AN INFANT WORRIES ME.

YOU WANT A LEAP OF FAITH?

TRY THIS ONE.

MATTHEW!

NO!

PFF

UNFF!
ARE YOU INSANE!?

PULLING YOU AND THAT... THING... UP? I MUST BE.
FLPP
TEN SECONDS -- EXPLAIN OR I SNAP IT.
THE KID... IS THE... ANTICHRIST!

THE ANTI..?

HAHAHA

Oh, MURDOCK -- THE JOB'S REALLY GETTING TO YOU.

HAHA

A MAN CAME TO ME TODAY. HE KNEW THINGS ABOUT THE CHILD. HE SAID IT'S THE HARBINGER OF THE END TIMES.

AND YOU BELIEVED HIM?!

HE KNEW I WAS DAREDEVIL!

SO DID THE GIRL, YOU SAID!

I'M BEING USED, NATASHA! YES, IT'S A BABY -- BUT HE'S HERE TO END THE WORLD!

SHE.

WHAT?

SHE. IT'S A GIRL.

YOU'RE SURE?

EITHER THAT OR HE'S EXTREMELY NOT WELL-ENDOWED. BUT THAT HAS NO BEARING ON WHAT JUST HAPPENED.

MY GOD... WHAT AM I DOING?

HONESTLY, MATTHEW -- I HAVEN'T A CLUE. I'M BEYOND SHOCKED. I DON'T THINK YOU'RE SAFE TO BE AROUND RIGHT NOW -- CERTAINLY NOT AROUND THE CHILD AT LEAST.

I SUGGEST YOU LIE DOWN OR SOMETHING, BUT DO NOT GO OUT THIS EVENING. HELL'S KITCHEN CAN SURVIVE A FEW HOURS WITHOUT ITS 'GUARDIAN DEVIL'...

...A POSITION I'M NOT SURE YOU'RE QUALIFIED TO HOLD AFTER TONIGHT!

GOD HELP ME -- NEITHER AM I.

THE UPTOWN BROWNSTONE OF LYDIA MCKENZIE...

AND YOU OWN THIS WHOLE THING?

DOUGLAS DOES -- IT'S BEEN IN HIS FAMILY FOR YEARS.

BUT I'LL GLADLY TAKE IT OFF HIS HANDS, THOUGH -- ONCE WE HAVE OUR DAY IN COURT, EH, COUNSELOR?

UH... YEAH. SPEAKING OF WHICH...

...I GUESS I'LL CALL YOU IN THE AFTERNOON TOMORROW -- IF I GET NEWS ABOUT THE HEARING.

FRANKLIN -- MAY I BE DIRECT WITH YOU?

SURE, LYDIA. SHOOT.

UM... LYDIA?

I KNOW -- YOU'RE INVOLVED WITH LIZ OSBORN. DON'T WORRY, COUNSELOR...

...I'M THE SOUL OF DISCRETION.

THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES I THOUGHT I WAS LOSING MY MIND.

TO BE QUITE HONEST, THERE ARE TIME I KNOW I'VE LOST MY MIND.

TONIGHT WAS ONE OF THOSE TIMES-- I ALMOST LET THAT BABY GO.

I HAVE TO GET HELP -- BEFORE THIS GETS OUT OF CONTROL. I HAVE TO TALK TO SOMEONE.

BUT NOT BEFORE I LOOK INTO THIS "SHEOL" -- SEE IF THERE'S...

OH, NO.

NOT THIS.

NOW NOW.

I PICK UP HER SCENT AS SHE GETS OFF THE ELEVATOR.

I CAN HEAR HER HAIR BRUSHING AGAINST HER JACKET.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE TOYING WITH MY LIFE BEFORE.

OH, MATT...

THE PROOF NOW STANDS OUTSIDE MY DOOR.

KAREN!

I WAS...

I WAS HOPING YOU WERE HERE!

KAREN -- WHEN DID..?

I'M SO SCARED. WHEN I FOUND OUT, I HAD TO FLY OUT HERE.

I'D THOUGHT ABOUT IT A MILLION TIMES -- HOW COULD I NOT? I MEAN, THE DRUGS, THE MOVIES -- THAT WHOLE PERIOD OF MY LIFE!

BUT I SWEAR -- I THOUGHT IT WAS ALL BEHIND ME! I THOUGHT I MAKE IT OUT ALIVE! I NEVER IMAGINED IT COULD EVER...

PLUMERI'S GYM

GOOD GOD, KAREN -- SLOW...

GOD?! FORGET YOU AND YOUR GOD, AFTER WHAT HE'S DONE TO ME!

WHAT'S THE MATTER, KAREN?! TELL ME!

I'M... I'M SORRY... SO SORRY... I...

MATT... I HAVE AIDS!

WHEN IT RAINS, IT POURS.

ZONE EMPIRE